

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-14 are pending in the present application, Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 14 having been amended, and Claims 2-4 and 15 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the amendments to Claims 1, 10, 11, 12, and 14 is found, for example, in original Claim 4 and in the specification at pages 19 and 24. Amendments to Claims 6 and 7 go only to form. Thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 3-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Athavale et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,539,386, hereinafter Athavale) in view of Walker et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,041,308, hereinafter Walker).

With respect to the rejection of Claim 1 as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment to Claim 1 overcomes the rejection. Amended Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "...replacing an entirety or a part of said product information disclosed on said electronic bulletin board with other information to be disclosed on said electronic bulletin until approval of the received request is obtained from the information manager."

Applicants acknowledge that the outstanding Office Action correctly states that "Athavale fails to explicitly teach limiting the disclosing of product information, which is pursuant to the request, until approval of the received request is obtained from an information manager, wherein said limiting includes, replacing an entirety or part of said requested product information with other information to be disclosed on said electronic bulletin board until approval of the received request is obtained from the information manager."<sup>1</sup> The outstanding Office Action relies on Walker to describe the replacing step of Claim 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Office Action, page 3.

The outstanding Office Action cites to Walker's disclosure of maintaining a product seller's anonymity within the conditional purchase order (CPO) management system 100 until a CPO is accepted.<sup>2</sup> However, maintaining seller anonymity does not describe or suggest "replacing an entirety or part of said product information disclosed on said electronic bulletin board with other information to be disclosed on said electronic bulletin board until approval of the received request is obtained from the information manager."

In a non-limiting embodiment of the claimed invention, an electronic database is formed to disclose product information. Anonymity of the product information is not maintained as the product information is disclosed on the electronic bulletin board. Then, a request to change the product information is received. Disclosure of product information is then limited until approval of the received request to change the product information is approved. Limiting the disclosure of product information is accomplished, in part, by replacing an entirety or part of the product information disclosed on the electronic bulletin board with other information to be disclosed on the electronic bulletin board until approval of the received request is obtained from the information manager. In the non-limiting embodiment of the claimed invention, when a request to change product information is pending approval, the product information disclosed on the electronic bulletin board is replaced with "under construction."<sup>3</sup>

Thus, maintaining seller anonymity does not describe or suggest the claimed "replacing an entirety or a part of said product information disclosed on said electronic bulletin board with other information to be disclosed on said electronic bulletin until approval of the received request is obtained from the information manager."

With respect to the rejection of Claim 4, now incorporated into Claim 1, as unpatentable over Athavale in view of Walker, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

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<sup>2</sup> Office Action, page 4, and Walker, col. 6, lines 36-38.

<sup>3</sup> Specification, page 25, lines 23-25.

Amended Claim 1 also recites “preregistering introduction information for introducing said person who wishes to disclose information in a preset recording area, and disclosing said introduction information on said electronic bulletin board until approval is obtained from the information manager.” The outstanding Office Action relies on Athavale to describe these elements of amended Claim 1.

The outstanding Office Action cites to col. 8, lines 23-56, col. 10, lines 33-41, and col. 11, line 49 to col. 12 line 32. However, none of these sections describe or suggest the above-noted element of amended Claim 1.

Col. 8, lines 23-56 and Col. 11 line 49 to col. 12, lines 32 of Athavale describes evaluator 60, which software module that provides authorization for the customer to make a change to his order. As shown in Fig. 3, there is no preregistering of introduction information, and no disclosing the introduction information on the electronic bulletin board until approval is obtained from the information manager. During the approval process, Athavale only describes placing a hold on the existing order.<sup>4</sup> Determining authorization to change an order does not describe or suggest “preregistering introduction information for introducing said person who wishes to disclose information in a preset recording area, and disclosing said introduction information on said electronic bulletin board until approval is obtained from the information manager.”

Col. 10, lines 33-41 of Athavale describes that once a modified order that has been validated is received, the modified order is stored in a storage medium at the manufacturing facility. The manufacturing facility then proceeds to fill the order. This does not describe or suggest “preregistering introduction information for introducing said person who wishes to disclose information in a preset recording area, and disclosing said introduction information on said electronic bulletin board until approval is obtained from the information manager.”

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<sup>4</sup> Athavale, col. 3, lines 1-3.

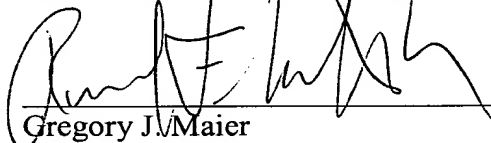
In addition, Walker does not cure the deficiencies in Athavale.

In view of the above-noted distinctions, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 (and Claims 5-9) patentably distinguish over Athavale and Walker, taken alone or in proper combination. In addition, Claims 10, 11, 12, and 14 are similar to Claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 10, 11, 12, and 14 (and Claim 13) patentably distinguish over Athavale and Walker, taken alone or in proper combination, for at least the reasons stated for Claim.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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